Mrs. Haldeman Regards Nixon As Worse Off Than Husband

Joanne Haldeman says that neither she nor her husband have ever heard a single word from former President or Mrs. Richard M. Nixon concerning Mr. Haldeman's conviction and imprisonment following the Watergate scandal.

Mr. Nixon has telephoned "a few times" since his former aide's downfall, Mrs. Haldeman said in the March issue of the Ladies Home Journal. Once he wished them a happy anniversary, the other times he wanted to check facts he needed for the book he is writing, she said. But she added that there has never been a word of sympathy from the Nixons for the Haldemans' fate.

Some of her friends find this "appalling," Mrs. Haldeman said, but she added that she does not because she believes that Mr. Nixon is worse off than her husband, who is completing his sentence at Lompoc Federal Prison.

"There are lines at Lompoc Prison that Bob cannot step across until he is released," she said, "but the walls at San Clemente are inescapable. There are all kinds of prisons. I'll take Lompoc."

Mrs. Haldeman also said that she disagreed with her husband's asking Mr. Nixon for a pardon. "I felt we had to stand on our record and let the people judge," she was quoted as saying in the magazine article. "And to me, it would have been very uncomfortable to live with a pardon."

Mrs. Haldeman continued: "As far as Watergate goes, I certainly don't admire the President's actions. However, I—and I mean this with tremendous sincerity—I think that what happened to Bob, to John Ehrlichman and to John Mitchell has been very hard on Richard Nixon. I feel that it has affected him emotionally. It's just that he's not able to express these feelings openly. What to say—'Gee, I'm sorry?'

"Often people wonder why I'm not bitter, but I'm not. Bob served a cause, and, if he could turn back the clock, he would consider it a privilege to serve again."